

PCTWORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
International Bureau

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification 6 : A23G 9/14	A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 97/26800 (43) International Publication Date: 31 July 1997 (31.07.97)
<p>(21) International Application Number: PCT/DK97/00028</p> <p>(22) International Filing Date: 22 January 1997 (22.01.97)</p> <p>(30) Priority Data: 0082/96 22 January 1996 (22.01.96) DK</p> <p>(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): TETRA PAK HOYER A/S [DK/DK]; Søren Nymarks Vej 13, DK-8270 Højbjerg (DK).</p> <p>(72) Inventor; and (75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): GONON, Peter [DK/DK]; Lauge Kochs Vej 8, DK-8200 Århus N (DK).</p> <p>(74) Agent: K. SKØTT-JENSEN, PATENTINGENIØRER A/S; Lemmingvej 225, DK-8361 Hasselager (DK).</p>		<p>(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AT (Utility model), AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, CZ (Utility model), DE, DE (Utility model), DK, DK (Utility model), EE, EE (Utility model), ES, FI, FI (Utility model), GB, GE, HU, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SK (Utility model), TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, ARIPO patent (KE, LS, MW, SD, SZ, UG), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).</p> <p>Published With international search report. In English translation (filed in Danish).</p>
<p>(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PRODUCTION OF ICE-CREAM</p> <div data-bbox="331 1171 1321 1402"> </div> <p>(57) Abstract</p> <p>In the production of ice-cream products which are continuously extruded after passage of a flowthrough freezer, it would be ideal if the ice-cream could hereby be brought down to a discharge temperature of -12 to -25 degrees centigrade, as the products could then be brought directly to final storing. So far, however, this has not been practically possible, since the use of conventional production technique with associated throughflow freezers creates fatal problems with respect to an unacceptable compaction of the air filled ice-cream and the heat development by the conveying and scraping effect of the conveyor worm in the throughflow freezer. The invention provides for a solution of both of these problems, partly by ensuring an acceptable air filling in using an adjustable resistance at the discharge side of the freezer, and partly in that this freezer itself is provided with a conveyor worm which, for effecting a very low scraping speed, has a very high pitch and is driven with an unusually low speed of rotation.</p>		

FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY

Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

AM	Armenia	GB	United Kingdom	MW	Malawi
AT	Austria	GE	Georgia	MX	Mexico
AU	Australia	GN	Guinea	NE	Niger
BB	Barbados	GR	Greece	NL	Netherlands
BE	Belgium	HU	Hungary	NO	Norway
BF	Burkina Faso	IE	Ireland	NZ	New Zealand
BG	Bulgaria	IT	Italy	PL	Poland
BJ	Benin	JP	Japan	PT	Portugal
BR	Brazil	KE	Kenya	RO	Romania
BY	Belarus	KG	Kyrgyzstan	RU	Russian Federation
CA	Canada	KP	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	SD	Sudan
CF	Central African Republic	KR	Republic of Korea	SE	Sweden
CG	Congo	KZ	Kazakhstan	SG	Singapore
CH	Switzerland	LI	Liechtenstein	SI	Slovenia
CI	Côte d'Ivoire	LK	Sri Lanka	SK	Slovakia
CM	Cameroun	LR	Liberia	SN	Senegal
CN	China	LT	Lithuania	SZ	Swaziland
CS	Czechoslovakia	LU	Luxembourg	TD	Chad
CZ	Czech Republic	LV	Latvia	TG	Togo
DE	Germany	MC	Monaco	TJ	Tajikistan
DK	Denmark	MD	Republic of Moldova	TT	Trinidad and Tobago
EE	Estonia	MG	Madagascar	UA	Ukraine
ES	Spain	ML	Mali	UG	Uganda
FI	Finland	MN	Mongolia	US	United States of America
FR	France	MR	Mauritania	UZ	Uzbekistan
GA	Gabon			VN	Viet Nam

WO 97/26800

PCT/DK97/00028

1

Method and apparatus for production of ice-cream.

The present invention relates to the production of ice-cream material and more specifically to a production
5 method of the type, by which the material in the form of the so-called mix with a substantial content of air is first cooled down to a conventional forming temperature of typically -5°C and then brought further to a throughflow freezer, in which it is attempted to cool down the mass to a
10 temperature of -15° or lower, preparatory to extruding the mass for the forming of the final ice-cream bodies for packing and final storing.

This 'type' of process is known from the literature, cf. DE-C-39 18 268, but not really from practice as far as
15 usual ice-cream is concerned, since the process has been found to involve quite marked problems. At the principal level the process type is highly attractive, because ideally it would make it possible to form and pack the ice bodies directly to the final storing, without the conventional use
20 of an intermediate and expensive low freezing system between the packing station and the final storage. Moreover, an intensive cooling of the mass will enable an improved product quality, in particular when producing larger block products.

The direct starting point of the invention was a test
25 system including a conventional throughflow freezer having a driven, scraping conveyor worm, dimensioned for a further conveying of the flow from the preceding, ordinary continuous freezer, which cools the mass down to some -5°C . As the flow remains unchanged it was natural to select increased or
30 unchanged pipe dimensions. At the outset, a standard mix of ice-cream with a so-called overrun (degree of swelling) of 100% was used, and in the throughflow freezer an evaporator temperature of approximately -40°C was used.

It was found rather soon that the achievable results
35 were entirely unusable in practice. It was found that it was difficult to reach the desired low temperature of the ice-cream, and moreover the overrun was decreased quite unacceptably, down to 30-50 %. Changed process parameters

WO 97/26800

PCT/DK97/00028

2

made no difference in this picture, but demonstrated that the drastical drop of the overrun was noticeably influenced by such changes.

5 A solution of the said problem was made difficult by the fact that it was not - and still is not - possible to precisely indicate the reason why the overrun turns out to be decreased.

10 However, according to the invention a surprising solution to the problem has been found, viz. by introduction of a controlled resistance in the flow from the throughflow freezer. From a processing point of view this will not be any particularly attractive solution, but it will be attractive anyway as long as it seems to be the only possibility of making the discussed 'type' of process practically usable at
15 all. Also, the said resistance will not in any way need to be so high that it will indirectly reduce the production capacity to some commercially uninteresting level.

20 Thus, some additional energy should undeniably be used for the forcing out of the mass from the throughflow freezer, but this amounts to almost nothing in view of the fact that in return the discussed type of process can then be used in practice for achieving a really usable result, i.e. providing a final product having the desired overrun, structure and low temperature.

25 It could be desirable that it would be possible to introduce as a simple measure the said delivery flow restriction as a permanent pipe narrowing, but the further efforts in connection with the invention have shown that this will not normally be sufficient, as the optimum constriction
30 is depending not only of the mechanical process parameters, but also of the formulation of the mix and the relevant process parameters. In practice, therefore, it seems to be a necessity to use a controllable, variable flow resistance. This may be realized by the use of an adjustable throttling
35 valve or pressure regulating valve or by the use of a controlled, partial heating of a narrowed discharge pipe.

In that the flowthrough freezer should operate with a heavy cold transfer at extra low temperature, there is

currently formed, on the inside of the freezer, an ice layer which should be scraped off. As it is also desired to effect a positive conveying of the ice-cream mass inside the cylinder, there will be no technical problem in combining
5 such a scraping and conveying, viz. in using a scraping worm conveyor, which is a known machine element. However, with a test system using such a known worm conveyor freezer the result is rather discouraging, as it is observed that in order to effect the scraping and the conveying of the ice-
10 cream mass it is required to supply so much energy that the freezer becomes ineffective because of the applied scraping, kneading and pumping energy, which will reveal itself as a heat development, directly opposing the the freezing. This can be counteracted by using a furtherly lowered temperature
15 on the cooling side, but only with the result that the building up of the said ice layer is promoted such that still more energy will be required for the scraping function, and it has been found that also this basic condition must be responsible for the discussed process 'type' not so far
20 having been realized commercially.

On this background and in connection with the invention it has been considered whether it could be possible to provide an entirely different and more effective throughflow freezer. Surprisingly enough, however, it has
25 been found possible to maintain the relatively effective and simple concept of a worm conveyor, when only the traditional design thereof is drastically changed with respect to the rotation speed of the rotor and the pitch of the worm winding or windings.

30 For worm conveyors in connection with flowthrough freezers it is customary to use a rotor rotation at some 100-1000 r.p.m., least for larger cylinders and highest for cylinders with small diameter. For a representative worm conveyor with an inner worm diameter of 105 mm the rotor
35 speed will typically be 200-600 r.p.m. which, by a typical worm pitch of between a whole and a half time the outer diameter of the worm will result in an axial scraping speed of 1-3.5 m/sec.

WO 97/26800

PCT/DK97/00028

4

With the invention it has been found possible and optimal to operate with a revolution figure of only some 5-20 r.p.m. as well as with a worm pitch that is unusually large, viz. between one to two times the outer diameter of the worm, preferably between 1 and 1 1/2 times this diameter. The said scraping speed will thus occur at a reduced value of only some 1-10 % of the conventional standard, but it has been found that in return it is then possible to realize the process in practice. What is actual is a practically usable compromise between the effect of the applied energy being sufficient for conveying and scraping without causing undesired heating. It is a surprising result that that the low scraping speed and the associated low scraping frequency is sufficient for keeping the heat exchanger surface clean to such an extent that it is possible to operate with a practically acceptable efficiency of the heat exchange.

It is even to notice that for good reasons it is required to use a refrigerant with an evaporation temperature lower than the approximately -30°C , which to the skilled persons has been considered as a minimum evaporation temperature in connection with continuous ice-cream freezers; it has previously been found that with still lower temperatures there will occur a too heavy solid freezing of the ice-cream on the heat exchanger surface. Apparently it is a paradox that with the invention and the associated reduced scraping it is possible to operate effectively with freezing temperatures of -40°C and colder, e.g. down to -100°C and preferably in the range of -50 to -60°C for achieving a good efficiency by the freezing down of the mass to about -15° through -22°C . It can only be confirmed, however, that the good results have been achieved by the use of the said modified continuous freezer, in which it is the worm itself that acts as the effective scraper tool.

There has been found no reason to assume that the aforementioned and in fact similarly important effect with respect to the preserving of the overrun should be particularly depending of the use of the discussed modified freezer, but on the other hand it can be confirmed that the

relevant good result can be achieved also by the use of this freezer, such that the combined result renders the said 'type' of process realizable in commercial practice.

The invention is illustrated in the drawing, in
5 which:

Fig. 1 is a schematic diagram for illustrating the process, while

Fig. 2 is a schematic representation of a throughflow freezer according to the invention.

10 The processing system for producing extruded ice-cream products as schematically shown in Fig. 1 comprises a continuous freezer 2 which, from a supply 4, is supplied with 'mix' passing a pump 6 and a mixing chamber 8, in which the mix is mixed with air from a compressed air source 10 for
15 achieving a overrun of traditionally some 100%. This ready made ice-cream substance is cooled in the continuous freezer 2 down to a temperature of approximately -5°C as fully conventional for a subsequent portioning out and shaping of the substance.

20 In connection with the invention, however, it is desirable to convey the the cooled substance further through a continuous freezer 12 for a subsequent extrusion at a temperature of -12 to -25°C , such that the cut ice bodies can be packed for transfer directly to the freezing store. The
25 freezer 12 should be positively conveying, i.e. it should comprise a conveyor worm 14 driven by a motor, which is here designated W in order to indicate that this driving will incur a certain supply of heat energy, partly for the conveying function itself and partly for the scraping work to
30 be effected by the worm for scraping off the solid frozen ice-cream mass.

Owing to the associated increased viscosity of the mass it would be natural to use a somewhat enlarged dimension of the discharge pipe 18 compared with the supply pipe 16,
35 but as mentioned it has been found that the final result of this is in fact unusable with respect to the overrun of the extruded mass. With the invention it has been found that this major problem can be solved by providing a discharge

WO 97/26800

PCT/DK97/00028

6

resistance R in the pipe 18. This resistance is relatively critical, inasfar as it should be noticeable for achieving the desired result with respect to the overrun, but not so noticeable that it gives rise to the conveying resistance in the freezer 12 increasing to a level at which the required conveying energy reveals itself as an unacceptable heat generation in the freezer.

This in itself is a noticeable problem, because it may imply that it is very difficult to achieve the desired cooling of the ice-cream, practically no matter how much the freezer is cooled from the outside. This will be considered in more detail below.

First, it is important to note that normally the required flow resistance R should be statically or dynamically adjustable, as extensive tests have shown that the optimum resistance depends of various process parameters, including the formulation of the mix and the discharge temperature and capacity of the ice-cream. It is customary that in a given system there will be produced products with different formulations and process conditions, and the resistance R should be adjustable accordingly, based on gained experiences. Normally, as a standard, the pipe dimension at the discharge side of the freezer 12 should be slightly reduced, but the resistance should still be adjustable. This will be achievable by a differentiated partial heating of the narrower pipe, but preferably a controlled throttling valve or a pressure regulating valve should be used, for example a controllabe constriction of a hose portion inserted in the discharge pipe

Next, it is important that the continuous freezer 12 operates with a relatively very low temperature at the primary side, e.g. in the range of -40° to -100°C , and that it is made with a special geometry as far as the conveying/scraping worm is concerned, in connection with an equally unusually low rotational speed of the worm, preferably as low as 5-20 r.p.m.

The freezer unit 12,14 is indicated in more detail in Fig. 2 with the following designations of dimensions.

WO 97/26800

PCT/DK97/00028

7

5 D1 = diameter of rotor core;
D2 = outer diameter of worm on this core;
D3 = inner diameter of surrounding freezing cylinder;
L = length of freezing cylinder and worm; and
P = pitch of worm.

With the invention the following relations are preferred:

10 $\frac{L}{D3} = 5-10;$

$\frac{P}{D2} = \frac{150}{105} = 1-2;$

15 $\frac{D2}{D1} = \frac{105}{75-90} = 1,1-1,4$ (height of worm winding).

20 The pitch P should not necessarily be constant along the length L, as it may vary as desired for an optimized design and for reducing the ice-cream pressure during the conveying thereof through the freezer 12.

WO 97/26800

PCT/DK97/00028

8

C L A I M S :

1. A method of effecting continuous production of an ice-cream substance, by which the previously cooled, air holding substance is passed through a continuous freezer for further cooling down to $-12 - -15^{\circ}\text{C}$ for subsequent extrusion, the substance being supplied to the freezer through a pipe of a first pipe dimension, characterized in that the ice-cream, downstream of the freezer, is passed through a pipe area which is narrower than said first pipe dimension, preferably in such a controllable manner that it is possible to adjust the associated flow resistance for the ice-cream substance, this resistance being adjusted to ensure a high overrun of the extruded substance.

2. A system for carrying out the method according to claim 2, comprising a continuous freezer of the screw worm conveying and scraping type with an infeed pipe of a first pipe dimension and a discharge pipe connected to an extrusion outlet for the frozen ice-cream, characterized in that the discharge pipe exhibits a constriction to a dimension smaller than said first pipe dimension, this constriction preferably being controllable for enabling its flowing resistance towards the ice-cream to be adjusted.

3. A system according to claim 2, characterized in that the said constriction is a controllable unit for mechanically adjusting the cross sectional area of the constriction.

4. A system according to claim 2, characterized in that the constriction is constituted by a pipe portion provided or connected with means for adjustably heating the pipe portion.

5. A system according to claim 2, in which the continuous freezer is made as a cylinder with a driven screw rotor for forcing the ice-cream through and out of the cylinder and for scraping off solid ice formations on the inside of the cylinder, characterized in that the screw rotor is connected with means for rotating it with very low speed, viz. in the range of 5-20 r.p.m., and that the pitch of the

WO 97/26800

PCT/DK97/00028

9

conveying and scraping worm of the screw rotor is very large, viz. 1-2 times the outer diameter of the worm.

6. A system according to claim 5, characterized in that at the outside of the continuous freezer there is an operation temperature of $-40 - -100^{\circ}\text{C}$.

1/1

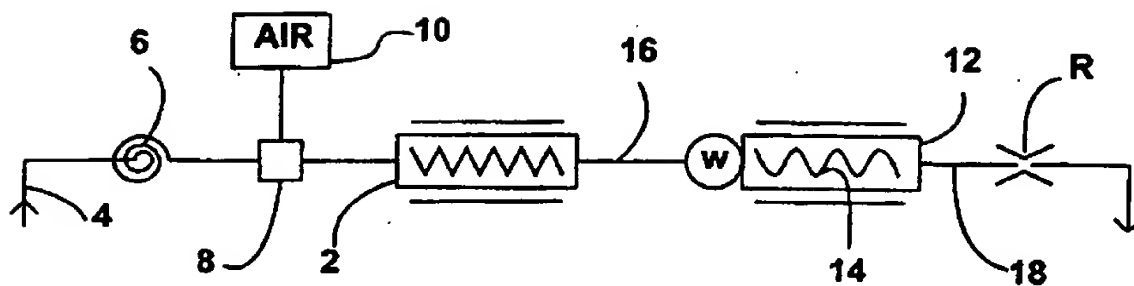


Fig.1

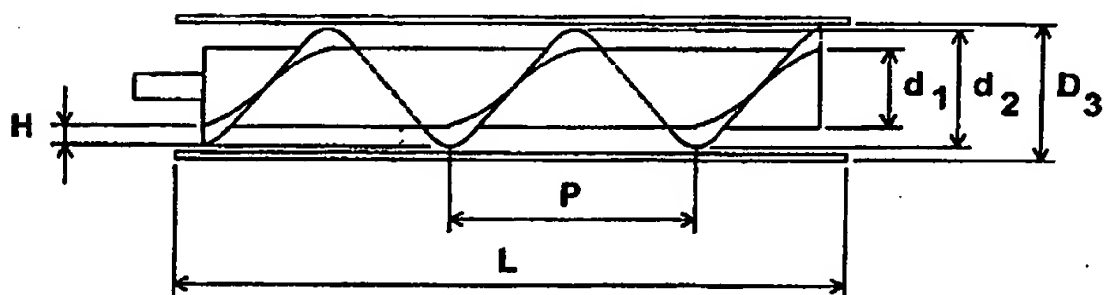


Fig.2

1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/DK 97/00028

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER		
IPC6: A23G 9/14 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)		
IPC6: A23G		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
SE,DK,FI,NO classes as above		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)		
DIALOG		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	EP 0401512 A1 (HMF KRAMPE & CO. GMBH ET AL), 12 December 1990 (12.12.90), column 9, line 26 - line 36, figure 3, abstract	1-6
	--	
A	DE 3837604 A1 (LUMEN GMBH NAHRMITTEL- UND MASCHINENFABRIK), 10 May 1990 (10.05.90), figure 1, abstract	1-6
	-- -----	
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "B" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art "&" document member of the same patent family		
Date of the actual completion of the international search		Date of mailing of the international search report
25 April 1997		08 -05- 1997
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ Swedish Patent Office Box 5055, S-102 42 STOCKHOLM Facsimile No. +46 8 666 02 86		Authorized officer Wiva Asplund Telephone No. +46 8 782 25 00

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (July 1992)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
 Information on patent family members

02/04/97

International application No.

PCT/DK 97/00028

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
EP 0401512 A1	12/12/90	SE 0401512 T3	
		AT 116528 T	15/01/95
		AU 5670190 A	07/01/91
		DE 3918268 C,R	26/07/90
		ES 2066900 T	16/03/95
		WO 9014775 A	13/12/90
DE 3837604 A1	10/05/90	DE 5890336 A	04/03/93
		EP 0441819 A,B	21/08/91
		SE 0441819 T3	
		US 5201861 A	13/04/93
		WO 9004927 A	17/05/90

Form PCT/ISA/210 (patent family annex) (July 1992)